

BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS OF A NEW “SURE START”

Guide for education colleagues

The problem

- Children and young people (CYP) in disadvantaged areas often face disconnected and delayed services, impacting health, learning, and life chances.
- Schools are significantly under resourced as community hubs and lack the support to effectively coordinate services for CYP and their communities.
- CYP and their families are often excluded from decision-making, meaning many professionals miss out on valuable insights that could improve support and make provision more effective.

What you can do as school staff

- **Champion your school to act as a gateway to services** by hosting or signposting to health, family, and youth support within your school premises. Build relationships with your local NHS, family hubs, and community centres.
- **Co-design provision with families and communities**, ensuring services meet local needs and reflect lived experiences. Check the QR code for examples of how this can be done.
- **Support a multi-agency working model**, building partnerships with health visitors, school nurses, mental health teams, and voluntary groups.
- **Push for additional investment into wraparound offers** (e.g., breakfast clubs, holiday activities, after-school care, family support).
- **Advocate for the use of place-based across service information on pupil needs** to guide service provision in your area – targeting local authorities and integrated care boards.

Evidence-based insights

There are around **60,000** missed opportunities to provide early help every year in England, as of 2019-20.

The number of qualified school nurses in schools has fallen by **33%** in the last 13 years from **1,135 to 852**.

Examples of good practice that you may wish to explore:

Reach Academy Feltham

An all-through school operating on a cradle-to-career basis offers co-located mental health, employment, and family services alongside education, creating a one-stop hub for CYP and families.

St Edmund's Nursery / Bradford Birth to 19

A programme that collaborates with health, care, and voluntary services to provide comprehensive support for CYP and their families, fostering a nurturing environment where all can thrive.

Glasses in Classes

An initiative bringing opticians and eye health services into schools - connected health and education data was used to identify children with vision problems and provide free glasses, significantly improving education outcomes..

SUCCESS (Supporting Understanding of Children's Communication, Emotional and Social Skills)

This project stationed multi-disciplinary teams within the school gates to conduct autism assessments, helping to provide major long-term savings as well as a reduction in waiting times for autism assessment and support.

Check out the innovative approaches outlined in this briefing and **consider implementing these practices into your school.**



Scan the QR Code for the report

Please share this guide and start a discussion in your school about how we can all play our role in building a country that works for all children and young people.